

Testimony of DR. SCOTT V. NICOL

Superintendent of the Ellington Public Schools
Chair of the BLAC Legislative Committee
Member of the CAPSS Legislative Committee

In Reference to House Bill No. 5037 AN ACT ADJUSTING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2023

TEACHERS OF COLOR - Revise the current funding plan for SB1034/SB1202 (PA 21-2) and designate \$5.5 million dollars annually as a line item in the Biennial Budget

Chairs Osten and Walker, Ranking Members Miner and France and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Dr. Scott V. Nicol, Superintendent for the Ellington Public Schools, Chair of the Legislative Committee for the Black Leaders and Administrators Consortium Inc. (BLAC) and member of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) Legislative Committee.

The State's commitment to increasing racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of Connecticut's teaching workforce has met with some success but not enough. Currently, educators of color (10%) are underrepresented relative to the number of students of color (50%) in the State of Connecticut.

Passed by the Senate in the 2021 session, SB1034 (LCO No. 4686) and adopted as part of the state budget implementer, SB 1202, requires 10% set aside of any increase in Alliance monies to fund minority teacher residency programs such as the Connecticut Teacher Residency Program. Re-appropriating Alliance District dollars to fund a statewide teacher diversity shortcoming is an inequitable legislative practice that diverts previously expended funds that Alliance districts depend upon to cover necessary staffing, programming and operating expenses.

The Ellington Public School (EPS)—not an Alliance District—which enrolls 26% students of color, has approximately 3% teachers of color employed. EPS was an early adopter of the Connecticut Teacher Residency Program, participating the last two years, and requires state funding to expand the program and ensure its sustainability.

Recommendation

Designate \$5.5 million dollars annually as a line item in the State Department of Education section of the biennial budget to support any Connecticut district partnering with a Residency Program and remove the 10% Alliance District funding re-appropriation requirement.